

Message Text

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ACTION MC-02

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FM AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2322

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LUANDA

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LOURENCO MARQUES 0061

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILI, MZ

SUBJECT: MUNITIONS CONTROL - ESPINGARDARIA DIANA LTA.

REF: LOURENCO MARQUES A-184 OF NOVEMBER 30, 1973; AND
STATE 9411

1. WE SHARE DEPARTMENT'S BELIEF THAT LARGE INCREASES IN
NUMBER OF EXPORT LICENSE APPLICATIONS AND QUANTITY OF FIRE
ARMS AND AMMUNITION DESIRED APPEAR TO EXCEED LEGITIMATE
SPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

2. RELIABLE SOURCE TELLS US ESPINGARDARIA DIANA LTA.,
BESIDES BEING ONE OF LARGEST SPORTING GOODS DEALERS IN
MOZAMBIQUE, IS LEADING IMPORTER AND SUPPLIER OF CARTRIDGES
FOR THE MOZAMBIQUE VOLUNTEER DEFENSE FORCE (OPVDC), PARA-
MILITARY ORGANIZATION HEADED BY ARMY OFFICERS BUT CONSISTING
LARGELY OF UNPAID VOLUNTEERS WHO CARRY OUT NORMAL CIVIL
DEFENSE AND EMERGENCY FUNCTIONS. LAST YEAR OPVDC WAS PUT
IN CHARGE OF AFRICAN PROTECTION MILITIA WHO GUARD ALDEA-
MENTOS, BRIDGES,
BUSINESS PROPERTIES, ETC. SINCE AN IM-
PORTANT FUNCTION OF PROTECTION MILITIA IS DEFENSE AGAINST

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FRELIMO ATTACKS, THEIR USE OF U.S. CARTRIDGES WOULD BE

CLOSELY TIED INTO PORTUGUESE WAR EFFORT.

3. MY BRITISH COLLEAGUE INFORMS ME THERE HAS BEEN SIMILAR JUMP THIS YEAR IN QUANTITY OF SHOTGUN AMMUNITION MOTAMBIQUE FIRMS SEEKING EXPORT FROM UK.

4. AS RESULT OF RECENT SPREAD OF FRELIMO ACTIVITY TO SOUTHERN PARTS OF VILA PEREIRA DISTRICTS, MANY CIVILIANS IN THESE AREAS HAVE ARMED THEMSELVES. ALTHOUGH ESPINGARDARIA DIANA IS LOCATED IN LOURENCO MARQUES, SOME OF THE SPORTING FIRE ARMS IT HAS ORDERED COULD EASILY FIND THEIR WAY INTO HANDS OF CIVILIANS FOR SELF DEFENSE PURPOSES.

5. DIVERSION OF SUCH ARMS AND AMMUNITION TO RHODESIA IS ALSO A POSSIBILITY.

6. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE RECOMMEND THAT EXPORT LICENSES FOR SPORTING GUNS AND AMMUNITION DESTINED FOR ESPINGARDARIA DIANA LTA. BE RESTRICTED TO QUANTITIES COMPARABLE TO THOSE EXPORTED IN PREVIOUS YEARS PLUS REASONABLE INCREASE. HENCE EXPORT LICENSES IN 33 PENDING CASES SHOULD EITHER BE REJECTED OR DELAYED AND SPREAD OUT OVER ACCEPTABLE PERIOD. HOWEVER, SINCE DEFENSE OF LIFE AND PROPERTY IS SERIOUS MATTER HERE, I DO NOT THINK USG SHOULD PUT ITSELF IN POSITION OF SEEMING TO DENY CIVILIANS A MEANS OF SELF DEFENSE AGAINST GUERRILLA ATTACK. THEREFORE, HOPE DENIAL OR POSTPONEMENT OF EXPORT LICENSES COULD BE BASED ON SUITABLY VAGUE GROUNDS OF UNWARRANTEDLY HIGH INCREASE IN QUANTITY, RATHER THAN ON FEAR THAT THE AMMUNITION OR ARMS WILL BE USED IN THE WAR EFFORT.
VAN OSS

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